

By: Israel

H.B. No. 2000

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a fund to assist local governments with the acquisition of voting system equipment.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 18.061(d), Election Code, is amended to read as follows:

(d) The secretary of state may contract with counties to provide them with electronic data services to facilitate the implementation of the statewide computerized voter registration list. The secretary shall use funds collected under the contracts to defray expenses incurred in implementing the statewide computerized voter registration list. Any amounts collected under the contracts not necessary to defray expenses incurred in implementing the list shall be allocated to the voting system fund established under Subchapter D, Chapter 123.

SECTION 2. Chapter 123, Election Code, is amended by adding Subchapter D to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. VOTING SYSTEM FUND

Sec. 123.091. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Eligible equipment" means voting system equipment that complies with applicable state and federal law on the date it is acquired.

(2) "Fund" means the voting system fund.

Sec. 123.092. VOTING SYSTEM FUND. (a) The voting system

1 fund is an account in the general revenue fund.

2 (b) The fund consists of:

3 (1) money allocated to the fund under Section 18.061;

4 (2) money appropriated to the fund by the legislature
5 under Subsection (d); and

6 (3) money transferred to the fund at the discretion of
7 the legislature.

8 (c) Money in the fund may be appropriated only for a grant
9 under Section 123.093.

10 (d) The legislature shall transfer to the fund an amount
11 equal to two times the amount of money deposited under Subsection
12 (b)(1).

13 Sec. 123.093. GRANTS FROM FUND. (a) A county or city may
14 apply to the secretary of state for a grant under this subchapter to
15 replace voting system equipment. A county or city is eligible to
16 receive a grant equal to not more than 50 percent of the total cost
17 of the eligible equipment.

18 (b) The secretary of state shall develop criteria for the
19 fair and proportional distribution of grants that consider:

20 (1) the number of voters likely to be served by the
21 eligible equipment;

22 (2) the age and condition of any equipment proposed
23 for replacement;

24 (3) the need for equitable distribution of grant funds
25 to both rural and urban counties and cities;

26 (4) whether the county or city governing body has
27 adopted a reasonable long-term plan to address the maintenance,

1 repair, and eventual replacement needs for the eligible equipment;
2 and

3 (5) any other factor considered relevant by the
4 secretary of state.

5 (c) If the total amount requested under qualifying grant
6 applications exceeds the total amount available for the purpose of
7 awarding grants, amounts shall be allocated using the criteria
8 developed by the secretary of state under Subsection (b).

9 Sec. 123.094. APPLICATION FOR GRANT; CERTIFICATION OF
10 COSTS. (a) To receive a grant under Section 123.093, a county or
11 city must submit an application to the secretary of state. The
12 secretary of state shall prescribe a form for the application.

13 (b) The application must describe:

14 (1) the type or types of eligible equipment proposed
15 for purchase or lease;

16 (2) the expected total cost of the eligible equipment
17 and any sources of funding that will be used for its purchase or
18 lease in addition to the grant funding provided by this subchapter;

19 (3) the county's or city's plan to address the
20 long-term maintenance, repair, and eventual replacement costs for
21 the eligible equipment; and

22 (4) any other information required by the secretary of
23 state.

24 (c) The secretary of state shall establish:

25 (1) a deadline for receipt of grant applications;

26 (2) a procedure for awarding and distributing grants;

27 and

1 (3) a process for verifying the proper use of the
2 grants after distribution.

3 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.